

rience to be consistent with modern scientific philosophy.

The final chapter continues this exploration of the relationship between scientific and historical knowledge. Leffler and Brent point out that the questions raised by modern scientific theory regarding the notion of scientific objectivity validate history as a discipline. They argue that science's recognition of irreversible time and the prevalence of complexity represents nothing less than a vindication of those traditional historical modes of inquiry that explore issues of complexity, disorder, and change.

Rejecting the notion of historical objectivity, Leffler and Brent offer Fernand Braudel and the Annales school, with their emphasis on incremental change over long periods of time and their use of diverse sources, as a model for historical inquiry. The emphasis upon context currently seen in the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places program is perhaps the most familiar example of an Annales school approach found within current cultural resource management practice.

In a somewhat obvious conclusion Leffler and Brent advance a methodology for reuniting public and academic history based upon the commonality of their approach. The authors argue that since contemporary science has rejected the Newtonian notion of objective truth and predictability, that the advocacy inherent in all forms of historical inquiry should no longer be seen as separating public historians from their academic colleagues. And bound together by a common methodological approach that emphasizes research, analysis, and presentation, all historians practice the same discipline and can benefit from increased contact and interaction.

Neither Leffler nor Brent is an American historian, and they neglect much of the rich literature in American historiography that is relevant to their subject. The running debate between objectivists and relativists is one of the enduring characteristics of the American historical profession, and is admirably recounted in considerable detail in Peter Novick's *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity" Question and the American Historical Profession* (1988), a work not cited by Leffler and Brent. In general, Leffler and Brent's work seems somewhat dated, perhaps a reflection of its 1984 origins. Nevertheless, it offers a brief, lucid view of the philosophy of history and advances a strong case for the discipline's relevance to society as a whole. For this alone the authors are to be applauded, and their work should be required reading for all practicing public historians.

NEDCC Rescues Deteriorating Photographic Negatives

The Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) in Andover, MA, has expanded its photoduplication service and now has the capacity to preserve large collections of photographic materials efficiently. The photoduplication laboratory was renovated and equipped with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and has the capacity to maintain the highest level of quality control in reformatting nitrate and early diacetate negatives onto safety film.

In addition to its reformatting services, NEDCC offers surveys of the preservation needs of photographic collections and conservation services for treatment of photographic prints. Gary Albright, NEDCC's photographic conservator, is one of a handful of professionally trained conservators of photographs in the country. NEDCC invites inquiries and would be glad to work with institutions in planning projects and developing funding requests.

The Northeast Document Conservation Center is a nonprofit regional conservation center specializing in the treatment of paper and related materials including photographs, books, architectural drawings, maps, posters, documents, wallpaper, and art on paper. Its purpose is to provide the highest quality conservation services and to serve as a source for advice and training for institutions that hold paper-based collections. The Center provides consulting services and performs surveys of preservation needs. It also performs paper conservation, book binding, and preservation microfilming as well as duplication of photographic negatives.

For questions regarding the duplication of photographic materials in our collection or to obtain an estimate call Mark Robinson, NEDCC's Director of Reprographic Services, or David Joyall, Technical Photographer, at 508-470-1010; or write to NEDCC at 100 Brickstone Square, Andover, MA 01810.

New Archeology Manual

A new manual is now available titled, *Archeological Resources Protection: Federal Prosecution Sourcebook*. It was prepared jointly by the Archeological Assistance Division of the National Park Service and the General Litigation and Legal Advice Section of the Criminal Division, Department of Justice.

The sourcebook is aimed at providing assistance and guidance to attorneys when a violation of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA), the Native American Graves Protection

and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA), or the Antiquities Act of 1906, occurs within their agency's jurisdiction. It contains legislative and administrative materials, selected commentary, indictments, legal memoranda, briefs, and other documents used in the investigation and prosecution of ARPA, NAGPRA, and Antiquities Act violations.

Plans for distributing copies are being developed. For more information, contact Debbie Dortch at 202-208-6843, or Richard Waldbauer, 202-343-4101.

Local News

Helping Local Governments

The Interagency Resources Division of the National Park Service has prepared two new publications of interest to local preservationists and others. Distributed to State Historic Preservation Officers in November, the publications cover Certified Local Government (CLG) grants and the relationship between subdivision regulations and historic preservation, respectively. The first, *Questions and Answers About CLG Grants from SHPOs: An Introductory Guide*, is an illustrated brochure which describes the basics of what kinds of projects are eligible for CLG Funding, how to apply, and how selections are made. The second publication, *Subdivision Regulation and Historic Preservation*, published as the latest issue in the *Local Preservation* series, introduces subdivision regulation as one of the principal means used by local governments to guide land development. The publication shows how land subdivision affects historic resources and how preservation concerns can be incorporated into subdivision ordinances and the subdivision review process. Both publications are available from SHPOs or from Interagency Resources Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, or call 202-343-9500.

Mobile's Endangered Properties List: A Useful Preservation Tool

John S. Sledge

The Mobile Historic Development Commission (MHDC) is responsible for the administration of historic preservation programs in Alabama's port city. Its areas of responsibility include design

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This house at 1200 Dauphin Street in Mobile was condemned by the fire marshal and was days from demolition (August 1990 photo). After being placed on the Endangered Properties List, it was purchased by new owners and underwent a \$80,000 restoration in which a \$10,000 facade grant played a role (September 1992 photo). Photos by the author.

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review, survey and registration, environmental review, awards programs, and education. Established in 1962 as an independent commission, the MHDC became a city department in 1988. By the latter year, the MHDC had succeeded in surveying all of two south Alabama counties and the city of Mobile, and had placed thousands of buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. Two architectural review boards conducted design review in the city's seven historic districts, and historic homes tours were regular and heralded events.

Despite these achievements, the preservation climate in Mobile was decidedly

gloomy during the summer of 1990. Hundreds of historic buildings were vacant and abandoned both in and out of the historic districts. The fire marshal waged an unrelenting campaign to tear these buildings down, and the police department's Crack House Program steadily wiped out historic shotgun houses in minority neighborhoods. Many downtown buildings looked run down and bombed out.

Thoughtful visitors to the city were alarmed at the continued erosion of historic building stock. Perhaps not since the black days of urban renewal had Mobile's historic buildings been so threatened.

To combat the situation, the MHDC added a new weapon to its preservation arsenal, an Endangered Properties List (EPL). Endangered Properties Lists are not new. The National Trust has had one for years, and it often makes national news when updated. The similarities to the concept of an endangered species list are obvious and guarantee wide public recognition. The Alabama Historical Commission in Montgomery maintains a state EPL and many local historic societies and agencies are exploring the concept.

In setting up its own EPL, the MHDC took advantage of Mobile's Certified Local Government (CLG) status. Each year the Alabama Historical Commission parcels out Federal grants from the National Park Service to local agencies. By law, a minimum of 10% of these appropriations must go to CLGs. Late in 1990 the MHDC applied for and received a \$7,500 planning grant to set up its new program. The city of Mobile agreed to match the grant on at least a 50-50 basis.

The MHDC's Endangered Properties List was released with great media fanfare in August of 1990. Radio, TV, newspapers and magazines covered the release and have continued to follow progress. The initial list consisted of 23 historic buildings, mostly in the downtown area. Chosen by a special Properties Committee of the MHDC, all of the buildings were either listed on the National Register or eligible for listing. Other criteria required that a building be threatened by such factors as vacancy, deterioration or neglect. Buildings beyond repair were avoided as lost causes.

The EPL's first year in Mobile was a great success. The public was educated about the plight facing historic structures and several buildings on the list were sold for restoration. The list proved highly useful in pressuring irascible owners to either sell or maintain their neglected buildings.

In the fall of 1991 the MHDC was able to apply Community Development Block Grant money toward buildings on the list in the form of \$10,000 facade grants. This HUD money, administered through the Mobile Housing Board, dramatically increased the EPL's effectiveness. Allowed \$50,000 a year (enough for five grants), the MHDC set up application procedures and developed a brochure to explain the program.

Interested parties were met at their property and briefed on the grant program. The MHDC's definition of facade work is broad, with both roof and foundation work being allowed. Free architectural renderings were provided in some cases, with the owners being responsible for their work write-up and cost estimates. The application package was then submitted to the MHDC Grants Committee, and if approved, submitted to